

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE  
Washington

REPORT OF THE ACCIDENT BOARD  
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE

Statement of probable cause concerning an accident which  
occurred to a commercially owned airplane near Sheridan,  
Wyoming, on September 26, 1935

To the Director of Air Commerce

On September 26, 1935 at approximately 12 30 p.m. at a point about 40 miles east-northeast of Sheridan, Wyoming, a commercially owned airplane, while making a cross-country flight, crashed with resultant death to all on board and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

The airplane, a Beechcraft, model B-17L, was owned by Manning & Terry, Incorporated, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and bore Department of Commerce license number NC-14416. The pilot, Emmett Ellvene Dildine, held a Department of Commerce transport pilot's license. The passengers were Lloyd C. Terry, Tulsa, Oklahoma, part owner of the airplane involved, and Margaret W. True, Shelby, Montana.

The take-off was made from Shelby, Montana at approximately 10.00 a.m. with Laramie, Wyoming as the destination. The weather was good at Shelby at the time of take-off. Whether or not the pilot checked the weather along the route before starting could not be determined. However, weather reports were available and the airplane was radio equipped. In the vicinity of Sheridan, Wyoming, the weather was so bad that air line planes did not fly and witnesses near the scene of the accident describe it at that point as sleet and snow with the clouds down below the mountain tops.

Investigation at the scene of the accident disclosed that the left lower wing of the airplane struck the side of a hill. From this point, the airplane had continued flight, scattering wing structure and fabric of both left wings, fabric from the fuselage and fabric and structure from the tail surfaces for a distance of two to three miles, where it crashed into another hill and burned.

Nothing was found to indicate structural failure other than that caused by collision with the side of the hill and, as far as could be determined, the engine was functioning normally.

It is the opinion of the Accident Board that the probable cause of this accident was poor judgment on the part of the pilot for proceeding into known bad weather.

Respectfully submitted,

ACCIDENT BOARD.

/s/ Jesse W. Lankford, Chief, Safety Section  
(Secretary)

/s/ Richard C. Gazley, Chief Engineer,  
Manufacturing Inspection Service

/s/ Joe T. Shumate, Jr.  
Chief, General Inspection Service